

WA State Employee Assistance Program December 2018

Holiday Tips

During this festive season, let there be light!

Daylight hours decrease this month and some people experience symptoms resembling depression. For some, these episodes can be relatively brief. For others, these symptoms can be quite disabling. Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) or “winter blues” is a real type of depression that comes and goes with lack of daylight and sun. Washington State has higher rates of depression compared to the national average.

Symptoms may include:

- Irritability
- Feeling more tired or low energy
- Heavy feeling in arms or legs
- Oversleeping
- Increased appetite



Some ways to check your mood and keep motivation steady during this time include:

- Get outdoors and exercise more often. Staying active and movement are good for you.
- Experience as much daylight as possible. Increase natural light in your home if you can.
- Spend time with positive people. It can be a great way to lift your spirits and avoid social isolation.



Stress Less? Yes!

Instead of trying to keep up with everyone else during this hectic time of the year, why not give the gift of putting yourself first—even if for just a few minutes each day—to practice self-care. There will always be someone else on social media whose life looks perfect, but anyone can have challenges hidden beyond what is visible. Catch yourself if you find you're trying to keep up with everyone else. Taking just a few moments to consider what you are grateful for today can help to calm and focus your mind on what matters.

Far and Away – Offering Compassion and Empathy

This time of year can be especially challenging for those whose loved ones are geographically or psychologically far away or deployed overseas. Let us be mindful of our colleagues and friends who may be having these challenges. A kind word or expression, listening with empathy, or offering a touch of support can help ease the load. 'Tis the season of giving. Compassion and empathy are free.



Need support getting through this season? The EAP is available to offer free, confidential assistance.

Call us any time: (877) 313-4455 or eap.wa.gov